

**IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME**

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**MULLAN HATCHERY**  
**1992**

**Prepared by:**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Mullan Hatchery is a resident species redistribution station located four miles east of Mullan, Idaho. The hatchery buildings and grounds are owned by the Shoshone County Sportsmens Association. Maintenance of the physical plant is funded through Shoshone County. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game funds personnel costs, production costs, and equipment through license fee dollars. The facility operates as a satellite of the Clark Fork Hatchery with one 8-month temporary employee on station year-round.

## HATCHERY IMPROVEMENTS

The Shoshone County Sportsmens Association completed repairs to an aging roof on the hatchery/residence. Many of the metal roofing sheets were repaired and bolted back in place during 1992.

The stairway and access roof to the second story crew's quarters was repaired in the spring of 1992. This not only improved habitability, but also corrected some safety discrepancies noted during the 1991 inspection by the Idaho Department of Labor and Industrial Services.

## FISH STOCKED OR TRANSFERRED

Approximately 53,000 rainbow trout >9 inches are released in waters of the Coeur d'Alene, St. Joe, and St. Maries river drainages from May to August each year to support a put-and-take fishery. The trout are transferred at full release size from the American Falls and Hayspur hatcheries in southern Idaho to holding ponds at the Mullan Hatchery. From there, the hatchery manager loads the fish into a 500-gallon pickup truck mounted tank and delivers them to hundreds of miles of stream. The distribution schedule requires 8- to 10-hour trips four to five days each week, or 59 days on the road out of 70 available working days. While lake stocking is usually accomplished with single large releases, river stocking is much more labor intensive.

## TAGGING STUDY

During the 1992 season, a portion of the trout released in the North Fork and Little North Fork of the Coeur d'Alene river were were floy-tagged.

Early in the season, 494 trout were tagged with a floy tag for identification purposes. Then during the month of June, the hatchery manager would select out a number (20-30) of the marked fish, read and record the tag number, and then release these fish over the days planting rout. Each tag number was logged by exact location stocked, and then Regional personnel would conduct a creel census to evaluate angler success and return-to-the-creel. the stream sections were also snorkeled to evaluate fish movement.

A similar study was carried out in the Little North Fork with some 900 tagged fish. This study ran the entire summer. All fish stocked were recorded by ID number and location. In addition, information on time of day, weather condition, water temperature, and angler usage was collected as part of the study.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

The Mullan Hatchery is located adjacent to a popular Shoshone County "day use" park. As a direct result, the hatchery receives a much higher visitor load than would be expected from its remote location. From April to October 1991, there were an estimated 5,300 visitors including several tour groups from local schools.

The hatchery maintains a covered visitor information center with a map of stocking areas and information about the special harvest regulations in the Coeur d'Alene River drainage.

On June 13, one of the dirt rearing ponds was stocked with rainbow trout to provide fishing for Free Fishing Day. Personnel from Region 1 provided training and advice to some 75 visitors that day. The evolution was particularly beneficial in providing access for persons having limited mobility.

## **SPECIAL PROJECTS**

Personnel at the Mullan Hatchery assisted in an evaluation of the put-and-take fishery on the Main Stem and North Fork of The Coeur d'Alene River conducted by the Region 1 staff. The trout were marked with reward Floy tags, and tag number by release site data was provided to Region 1 biologists.

During the 1992 season, volunteer Sheldon Carlton of Hagerman, Idaho assisted in hatchery operations. He resided in the crew's quarters and increased hatchery security, as well as providing visitor information and assisting rearing and stocking fish. The Hatchery Host program has been a real asset during funding restrictions. Without this additional manning, the hatchery was left unattended in the absence of the manager. During the previous year, the Mullan Hatchery was vandalized and one of the residences was burglarized during occasions such as these. The 1992 season had none of these events, primarily due to full time manning.

